

[3 May, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

NHs in Kerala

3149. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the length of National Highways in Kerala and the total amount spent on their maintenance and upkeep during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the proposals pending for upgradation of State Highways into National Highways; and

(c) the status of each proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) The length of National Highways (NHs) in Kerala is 1526 km. The amount spent on their upkeep and maintenance during the last 3 years starting from 2004-05 is Rs 31.83 crore, Rs. 55.45 crore and Rs. 19.89 crore respectively.

(b) and (c) There is only one proposal received from the Government of Kerala for declaring the State road as National Highway. At present, declaration of new roads as National Highway is not the priority of the Government. The emphasis is on improvement of the existing National Highways to NH standards.

Road Safety and Traffic Management Boards

3150. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether concerned over the growing number of road accidents in the country, Government have earmarked one per cent of the total proceeds of the cess on diesel and petrol for the Road Safety Fund, which would be about Rs. 120 crore;

(b) if so, whether Government have decided to set up National and State Road Safety and Traffic Management Boards;

(c) whether the National and State boards are to be constituted through an Act of Parliament with members and experts drawn from various fields; and

(d) if so, to what extent these steps have helped in improving the road safety?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (d) Government has not yet earmarked one percent of the total proceeds of the cess on diesel and petrol for the Road Safety Fund. However, on the recommendations of the Committee on Infrastructure, this Ministry had constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri S. Sundar, former Secretary of the then Ministry of Surface Transport to deliberate and make recommendations for setting up an effective and dedicated agency for Road Safety and Traffic Management. The Committee submitted its report on 20.2.2007. The main recommendations of the Committee *inter alia* include creation of National Road Safety & Traffic Management Board through an Act of the Parliament Enabling provision has been suggested in the report for creation of similar bodies at State level. The Committee has recommended earmarking of atleast, 1% of the total proceeds of cess on diesel and petrol for road safety fund. The recommendations of the Committee have been circulated among the States/UTs and concerned Ministries/Departments for their comments.

Exemption to MPs and MLAs from Toll Tax

†3151. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Rajasthan have requested for exemption of MPs and MLAs from toll tax on National Highways in Rajasthan; and

(b) if so, by when necessary amendments to provide the said exemption would be issued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir. However, only toll/user fee (not toll tax) is being collected.

(b) Only in 2 cases of National Highways in Rajasthan, namely Udaipur bypass on NH-8 and Jaipur-Kishangarh Section of NH-8, exemption is not available to all MPs and MLAs/MLCs from Rajasthan. As per Concession

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.